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DE RUEHJA #3442/01 3531013
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 191013Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7476
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4596
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1800
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3598
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1346
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2185
RUEHBAD/AMCONSUL PERTH 0499
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 003442

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, DRL, DRL/IRF
INR FOR CHARLIE ZENZIE
NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/19/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [KISL](#) [PHUM](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM -- ISLAMIC SECT COMES UNDER
ATTACK AGAIN

REF: A. JAKARTA 3042
[1](#)B. 05 JAKARTA 10361

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Members of the Ahmadiyah community--an Islamic sect--have had their local activities halted by militants during a violent confrontation in West Java, December 18. Several Ahmadiyahs were injured in the melee. Mobile Brigade (a.k.a., "Brimob") units were sent in and--to the GOI's credit--separated the two groups. The local government, unfortunately, seems cowed by the militants and is not offering protection to the Ahmadiyahs, who are considered heretics by Indonesia's majority Sunni Muslim community. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) ATTACK IN WEST JAVA: West Java's Ahmadiyah community has come under attack. Several hundred members of a group calling itself the "Kuningan Muslim Community" attempted to storm Ahmadiyah community homes and two mosques on December 18 in Kuningan, West Java. Members of the community tried to form a human shield to protect their compound from the attackers, but were pushed back.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Indonesian National Police (INP) reported that both sides threw rocks before the police intervened, but local police units were unable to stop the violence. INP Mobile Brigade units were subsequently called in and press reports say Brimob used tear gas to disperse the crowds. Community leaders have told us that up to seven Ahmadiyahs were stabbed by the attackers, but no major injuries were reported. There was considerable damage to Admadiyah-owned property.

[1](#)4. (SBU) A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE: Ahmadiyah's living in this particular community have been previously targeted. The community in the Kuningan region--consisting of about 3000 members--was atTacked in 2005 during a nation-wide wave of attacks against the sect. After that round of violence, the Kuningan regent, regency Attorney General's office, and the regency Religious Affairs bureau issued an interagency decree that banned all Ahmadiyah activities in the name of

maintaining public peace. The community's mosques and buildings were sealed by the local administration in July-August 2005, but subsequent support from former president Abdurrahman Wahid helped the group maintain its presence in the region despite the formal ban.

15. (C) LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE: The local government appears to have played a negative role in the situation. The local prosecutor told the media that the local government recently ended the "status quo"--i.e., allowing Ahmadiyahs to practice their religion on a de facto basis--in order "to prevent violence" after several threats were made against the community. The regent decided on December 14 to shut down permanently the sect's activities and facilities. The militants, however, claim that Ahmadiyah activities continued and cited a 2005 edict from the Indonesia Ulema Council (ref A) that bans the group as justification for storming the compound on December 18.

16. (C) FEW DEFENDERS: Although Indonesian human rights advocates are monitoring the case closely, long-term prospects for the Ahmadiyah community in Kuningan are not good. Many mainstream Islamic leaders are reluctant to defend the Ahmadiyah group because its beliefs fall outside of accepted Islamic religious norms. Previous civil society demands for the national and local government to uphold religious freedom have done little to help the Ahmadiyah community and other fringe sects--such as al-Qiyadah (ref B)--around the country.

17. (C) Believers operating outside of the accepted Islamic mainstream also have to contend with the effects of the MUI's 2005 edict against the Ahmadiyah. The MUI's decree appears to have had substantial staying power and remains a potent justification for militants to press local governments to take action--as well as an excuse for direct violent

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action--against groups outside the mainstream.

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